

# NOW SHOWING

## Your Complete Movie Review Guide

- ★★★★★ **Unmissable** Everyone should go immediately – and everyone should love it. Trust us.
- ★★★★ **Very good** We urge you to go, even if you don't usually like this sort of thing.
- ★★★ **Good** If you usually like this sort of thing, you should certainly check this out.
- ★★ **Fair** A bit disappointing, but if you like this sort of thing there is the odd good moment.
- ★ **Tragic** Nothing to recommend it. Don't waste your time or money.

This section reviews new films on release theatrically in June. Any omissions were unable to be seen before we went to print and will be reviewed next issue.

Any queries? Drop us a line at...  
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## STAR WARS: EPISODE III – REVENGE OF THE SITH

### RELEASED OUT NOW

RATED M15+

**CAST** Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Hayden Christensen, Samuel L. Jackson, Ian McDiarmid, Anthony Daniels

**DIRECTOR** George Lucas

**SCREENWRITER** George Lucas

**RUNNING TIME** 140 minutes

**IN A NUTSHELL** Anakin turns to the dark side under the tutelage of Palpatine, and becomes a tool in the Republic's war on the Jedi order. It's up to his old teachers Obi-Wan and Yoda to try and stop the fallen Knight before he destroys everything he loves.

You all know how it goes by now. The lights dim, a cheer goes up and two hours later 500 disappointed *Star Wars* fans pour out of the cinema, hissing the obvious question, "Why can't Lucas just get it right?" Well, this time around, there's little disappointment – George Lucas has come as close as he possibly can to making a film that lives up to the original *Star Wars* trilogy's cast-iron legacy.

Despite what you may have heard about this being the darkest of the six films, the first 20 minutes is a fists-in-the-air, hootin'-and-a-hollerin' thrill ride. Kicking off with a space dogfight to top *Episode IV's* Death Star attack and a rescue mission aboard General "I'm an evil robot with a cough" Grievous's space cruiser, *Revenge Of The Sith* manages to capture the feeling of wild excitement that accompanied the original. The rescue operation sets a cracking pace for *Sith*, and is loaded with lightsabre battles, R2-D2 wisecracks and an elevator-shaft escape that harks back to the classic trash compactor scene of *Episode IV*.

It's almost enough to permanently distract you from the predictably bad dialogue between Padmé and Anakin that follows – and there's a lot of it. Keeping the inevitable "talky" bits to a minimum is a necessity, especially when you've got an actress such as Natalie Portman struggling to show any



"Zach Braff, Darth Vader... Why can't I get a boy with a normal name?"

### "HECK, YES! FELLOW FANS, STAR WARS IS BACK."

enthusiasm for dire lines such as, "Anakin, you're breaking my heart!" On the flip side, Hayden Christensen and Ewan McGregor seem far more at home in front of the greenscreen than they did in *Attack Of The Clones*, and both riff off each other in quite a believable (albeit theatrical) manner.

But enough about the acting, that's not what we're here for. The visual effects are nothing short of mind-blowing, looking even more seamless and realistic than *Attack Of The Clones* – it's often hard to remember that characters such as Yoda and General Grievous are actually computer-generated. Avoiding the seizure-inducing mega-battles of *Clones* (apart from a brief melee on the Wookiee planet) not only makes the necessary CGI

seem more believable, it also makes the action a lot easier to follow.

No matter what you may think about CGI, there's no denying that Lucas squeezes every ounce of impact out of the medium, and *Sith's* many lightsabre duels are testament to ILM's skill. From the second General Grievous fires up his quartet of stolen lightsabres and takes on Obi-Wan, or a digital Chewbacca is catapulted onto a speeding water-droid, you'll be thanking the pixel-gods for their techno-gimmickry.

Of course, all the fancy special effects and romantic nostalgia isn't worth squat if the plot doesn't hold up, and despite all of the planet-hopping and political mumbo jumbo, the core of *Revenge Of The Sith's* story remains solid. In fact, it lives up to its promise, leaving few questions unanswered and perfectly setting up for the beginning of *Episode IV* as the final credits roll. Lucas has even gone so far as to integrate some of *Episode IV's* production design into *Sith*, which no doubt will soften the jarring difference between the technology employed on the two films. The white plexiglas hallways on the space cruisers, the familiar landing decks and even prototype TIE fighters all point towards a believable transition into the world of *Star Wars* (circa 1977).

But the last question that needs to be answered is, does Darth Vader still have impact? Heck, yes! We dare anyone to keep their cool when he makes his first laboured breath from beneath the mask. Fellow fans, *Star Wars* is back.

**MATT COYTE**

### ANY GOOD?

A fitting and satisfying end to a troubled second trilogy. Far from perfect, but better than *Episodes I, II* and *III* combined.

★★★★★





